11/24/77

Dear Harold,

I thought that when the election was over my life would return to normal - whatever that might be - however, that hasn't happened yet. As expected, I lost the election - 1058 to 618. All things considered though, that was a damn good showing. In fact, that's the most votes anyone running against the "machine" has ever gotten. Independent candidates in Homestead are accustomed to losing as bad as 7 to 1. The location of my name on the ballot didn't help much; I've talked to several people who said they wanted to vote for me but couldn't find my name. That's hard to believe but the fact is the majority of the people around here simply don't know how to vote. I had one lady come out of the voting machine & tell me that she couldn't find my name so she wrote it in. Unfortunately she didn't know how to cast a write-in vote & so ended up giving me a vote for Judge of Superior Court. O well, it's the thought that counts! After talking to several politicians from the neighboring communities I'm convinced that had I been running in one of those communities, I would have been elected. A different "class" of people live in the communities outside of Homestead. Here, I had to contend with alot of elderly persons who are actually afraid of the voting machine, alot of young, uneducated persons & a majority of middle aged people who have been brainwashed into voting a straight ticket. Many people, especially those

with borough jobs, literally "race" each other to see who can vote the fastest. The organization has people at all the polls taking notice of how long it takes you to vote so that if you're a borough employee, for example, & are in the booth long enough to be suspected of not having just pulled that one lever, you're in Big Trouble. Although it was at times very frustrating, some positive things came out of it all. The day after the election The local paper called me up to get my overall impression of the whole thing; I told the reporter that the members of the machine didn't really win anything, they just bought themselves a little more time. I meant "bought" literally. This election cost them more money than they've ever had to dish out before. Inflation has even hit the vote buying business! We really had them running scared. They even put some money into a flyer that was circulated throughout the borough. However, it was so bad it probably cost them votes. I guess they felt they had to do something because we put out 3 flyers in the 4 days prior to the election. Our committee is also responsible for 2 investigations that are underway, one by the FBI & one by the Nat. Labor Relations Board. We also may have prompted possible lawsuits by the ACLU & Nat. Organization for Women. To top it all off, we may still end up in court over the election because the guy who defeated me is still defying a court order to either give up his county job or his elected post.

An added complication to all this is that we may be moving in the not too distant future. We've been looking at houses for several months & finally found one in a good location that we all liked. As of right now, the house is ours. My dad made an offer & it was accepted. There's just a few things that have to be checked out before we make the down payment. I really have mixed feelings about it. For as long as I can remember I've wanted to get the hell out of Homestead. The street I live on has been going steadily downhill for the past 10 years & If we wait any longer to sell our house we're going to have trouble getting rid of it. I sure wouldn't want to buy a house here! On the other hand, with everything I'm [redacted] involved in now I have more reasons than ever to stay. The group of people I've been working with here throughout the election [redacted] fantastic & is slowly but surely making progress. Now that we can see a very faint glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel I would like to be around to see it through. Plus, I feel obligated to everyone; They worked so hard on my campaign & already have plans to have me run for committeewoman in the spring. I'd hate to back out now. Even if we moved I'd still help them out in anyway possible, but it wouldn't be the same as being right there in the middle of everything.

With everything that's been happening I haven't been able to find the time to take

a drive down. Mary just told me that her schedule will be changing soon so that she should have 3 weekends a month off. She's not sure when that will start but if it happens before the blizzards start we hope to stop down to say hi some weekend. It's still up in the air but I'll let you know when & if we make any definite plans.

Take care & tell Lil I said hi.

Best,
Karen